

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LONDON 03915 032143 Z

12

ACTION EUR-25

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RSC-01 USIA-12 PRS-01 COME-00 EB-11 LAB-06 SIL-01

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R 031818 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0237

INFO AMEMBASSY MADRID

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 03915

E. O. 11652: XGDS

TAGS: PINT, UK, SP

SUBJECT: BRITISH LABOR PARTY AND THE CARABANCHEL TEN

1. MICHAEL FOOT, LABOR M. P., AND WILL PAYNTER, FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL UNION OF MINeworkERS, HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE AT LABOR PARTY HEADQUARTERS APRIL 3 TO GENERATE PUBLICITY FOR THE PLIGHT OF THE " CARABAN-CHEL TEN" -- TEN MEMBERS OF A CLANDESTINE SPANISH TRADE UNION ORGANIZATION WHO ARE IN MADRID'S CARABAN-CHEL PRISON AWAITING TRIAL FOR ILLEGAL TRADE UNION ACTIVITIES. FOOT AND PAYNTER HAD JUST RETURNED FROM A TWO- DAY FACT- FINDING MISSION TO MADRID WHERE THEY HAD SPOKEN WITH LAWYERS INVOLVED IN THE CASE AND WITH

FRIENDS AND FAMILY OF THE IMPRISONED MEN.

2. MAINTAINING THAT SPAIN IS MOST ANXIOUS TO PROJECT A FAVORABLE INTERNATIONAL IMAGE TO ENHANCE ITS PROSPECTS FOR ADMISSION TO THE EC, MICHAEL FOOT ARGUED THAT MAXIMUM PUBLICITY ABROAD AFFORDED THE BEST MEANS OF SECURING THE PRISONERS' RELEASE. HE AND PAYNTER INDICATED THAT THEY WOULD SOON URGE THE LABOR PARTY AND BRITISH TRADE UNIONS TO TAKE VARIOUS UNSPECIFIED ACTIONS TO BRING PRESSURE TO BEAR ON THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT.

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PAGE 02 LONDON 03915 032143 Z

3. THE FCO SAYS IT HAD NO PRIOR KNOWLEDGE OF FOOT'S VISIT TO MADRID, AND THAT HMG CERTAINLY HAS NO INTENTION OF MAKING ANY REPRESENTATIONS TO THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT ON BEHALF OF THE CARABANCHEL TEN.

4. COMMENT: FOOT AND PAYNTER UNDERTOOK THEIR MISSION AT THE BEHEST OF AN OFFICIAL SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE LABOR PARTY'S NATIONAL EXECUTIVE. NONETHELESS, WE ARE DISINCLINED TO ATTACH MUCH SIGNIFICANCE TO THE TRIP OR TO ANY ACTIONS THAT MAY STEM FROM IT. AGITATION ON BEHALF OF POLITICAL PRISONERS IN SPAIN, GREECE, TURKEY, AND ELSEWHERE IS FAIRLY STANDARD STUFF AMONG LABOR PARTY LEFTWINGERS AND IS DESIGNED AS MUCH AS ANYTHING TO PLACATE ACTIVISTS AMONG THE PARTY'S RANK- AND- FILE.

ANNENBERG

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*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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